



**Senate Bill 1522—Modified Diploma
Senate Committee on Education
February 7, 2018**

Introduction:

Good afternoon Chair Roblan and members of the Senate Committee on Education. For the record my name is Jessica Nguyen-Ventura, Legislative Director for the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). I am here to provide information and to support Senate Bill (SB) 1522 and the accompanying amendment. Joining me is Elliot Field, Education Specialist at the Oregon Department of Education, who can provide additional information on the technical aspects of Senate Bill 1522.

Background

Last session the legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 20, which addressed Modified Diplomas. SB 20 helped the department comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). There was a misunderstanding between ESSA requirements and the types of diplomas that would count for graduation. SB 20 helped the department clarify that for the field.

After SB 20 was passed ODE gained additional clarity on ESSA requirements and heard from many parents, districts, teachers and administrators about concerns they had in relation to the Modified Diploma. The primary concern was that students who received Modified Diplomas would no longer be eligible to receive special education services until age 21. As a result, ODE went through a collaborative process with partners such as OSBA, COSA, OEA and legislative staff to find a solution.

Additionally, the State Board of Education adopted temporary rules to ensure students who had earned and been conferred a Modified Diploma would continue to be eligible for services until July 1, 2018. This gave the Department and partners time to come to the legislature with a permanent solution. That solution is SB 1522 .

Senate Bill 1522

Senate Bill 1522 returns the rights and privileges of students who receive a Modified Diploma to continue to be eligible for special education services until age 21 or until they receive a Standard Diploma.

ODE encourages the passage of Senate Bill 1522 and also supports the dash one amendments. The amendments resolve issues in the following two areas:

1. The Youth Corrections Program (YCEP) provides a high school education to all eligible youth incarcerated in Oregon. SB 20 changed ORS 327.026(2), including students who received

Modified Diplomas to the list of youths for whom YCEP programs could not receive money from the State School Fund. The dash one amendments would allow YCEP to collect funding for YCEP students who have received Modified Diplomas and return for services—as was the case before SB 20.

- The amendments do not subtract money from the State School Fund as it would not adjust the calculation of how YCEP is funded under ORS 327.026(2).
 - There is no increase to Average Daily Membership. Currently under the State Board of Education adopted rules, students who receive Modified Diplomas prior to July 1, 2018, continue to qualify for special education services until July 1, 2018. The amendments remove modified diplomas from the YCEP program funding prohibitions and allow modified diploma recipients to continue to receive services, just as they would have before SB 20.
2. The second problem the dash one amendments resolve is the ability for a student who received a Modified Diploma and returned to school for special education services to continue to be eligible to participate in the Expanded Options Program (EOP) to receive college credit. EOP was created in 2005 under Senate Bill 300 with the goal to provide students with additional options to continue or complete their education, and to allow them to earn concurrent high school and college credits through public community colleges and universities in the state of Oregon. SB 20 made this opportunity unavailable to students receiving Modified Diplomas.

The goal of SB 1522 and the amendments is to provide every student the opportunity to get a quality education in the State of Oregon. It aligns with ODE’s equity values and it aligns with the 40-40-20 educational goal. ODE supports SB 1522 and the dash one amendments. We ask the Senate Committee on Education to adopt the dash one amendments and pass SB 1522.